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SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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This is Number 1 of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's monthly consumer newsletter, SERVICE. Its purpose is to tell you about the many consumer activities of the Department, to announce new bulletins and new research, and to make available program materials. The Department's consumer services reach into 50 different areas--areas that range from food grading and inspection to house plans to outdoor recreation on public and private lands. For more information, write to the Editor, SERVICE, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

AVAILABLE BOOKLETS

Top Consumer Publications. Family Fare, a cookbook that accents food management, again heads the U.S. Department of Agriculture's list of most popular publications. The Department mailed out more than 815,000 copies of this bulletin last year. Also on the list of Top Ten are Removing Stains from Fabrics, Food for Fitness, Food and Your Weight, U.S. Grades for Beef, Home Care of Purchased Frozen Foods, Selecting and Growing House Plants, Food for the Young Couple, Home Freezing of Fruits and Vegetables, and Cheese Buying Guide for Consumers. Anyone interested can get single copies of these publications by sending a postcard with his name and address to the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Be sure to specify which publications you want.

NEW PRODUCTS

Molded Cotton Fabric. Hats, shoes, undergarments--even furniture upholstery--may soon be made of a single piece of cotton fabric that has been permanently molded into shape. The new process which makes this possible comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Its advantages are several. For example, molding the pointed toes of women's fabric shoes would eliminate tiny folds and make the shoes look and fit better. Moldable fabrics also would cut costs in producing upholstered sofas and chairs.



Jelled Applesauce. USDA research scientists have developed a way to process jelled applesauce. The jelled sauce holds its firmness at temperatures up to 120° F. It can be served on the same plate with other foods, even warm foods, without spreading. Attractive molded desserts or salads can be made by heating the jelled applesauce to liquefy it and pouring it into a mold dish over pieces of fruit, berries, vegetables, nuts, raisins, or meat. The applesauce is especially tasty with pork.

INSECTS AND DISEASE

Biological Weapon for Japanese Beetles. Four land-grant universities are working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to find a way to mass-produce milky disease spores as a biological weapon against the Japanese beetle. Presently these spores are produced in diseased beetle grubs, which are processed for use as a soil treatment by homeowners. This method is not practical for producing spores in quantities sufficient to control the relentless westward spread of the Japanese beetles. Further research is needed. The four cooperating universities are: Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan State, Kansas State.

USDA Approves New Laundry Disinfectant. Pine oil has been added to the list of disinfectants which are effective in washing machines. Dr. Ethel McNeil, U.S. Department of Agriculture microbiologist, recommends its use--or the use of a chlorine bleach, or a phenolic or quaternary disinfectant--whenever there is sickness in the family. Research studies show that large numbers of bacteria (especially the dangerous staph) survive hot water and detergents. To prevent the transmission of infection from one person's garments to another, a disinfectant is necessary.

Road Blocks for Insects. Kraft paper bags--the kind used in food warehouses--are no obstacle to an insect which has set its mind on getting to the goodies inside. Warehousemen have long complained of bugs in bags. Now, however, packaging research in the Department of Agriculture has partially solved this problem. The researchers seal the tops and bottoms of the bags with a tape that melts into the stitching holes--the favorite route of insects. To prevent them from boring through the walls of a package, the scientists are working on a bag that is four layers thick. The outside layer will contain a substance to repel the insects; the inner three layers will protect the food from the insect repellent.

NUTRITION NEWS

Conserving Nutritive Values. Foods--whether they are fresh, frozen or canned--lose nutrients if they are not properly handled by the homemaker. A new bulletin, written by USDA nutritionists, tells how to keep this loss to a minimum. It also calls attention to some of the important nutrients that are affected by the way you store, handle, cook and serve foods. Single copies of the bulletin are free from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Send a postcard with your name and address. Ask for Conserving the Nutritive Values of Foods, HG-90.

The School Lunch. You don't have to pack your child's lunch each day to be sure he gets a well-balanced, nutritious meal at school. He can buy--for about 25 cents--a hot meal that meets 1/3 to 1/2 of his daily nutritive requirements. The meal is served in all institutions participating in the National School Lunch Program--some 68,000 public and private schools.

FOOD FACTS

Plentiful Foods for November. Want to know what foods will be especially abundant this month? Marketing specialists in the U.S. Department of Agriculture each month put out a Plentiful Foods List which homemakers can use in planning menus and shopping for good buys. The November list features two traditional Thanksgiving favorites--turkeys and cranberries. Also included are apples, grapes, potatoes and Maine sardines.

USDA Egg Grades Indicate Quality. When buying eggs, remember the grade shows the difference in quality--not size. There are eggs of every size in every grade. For example, a carton of U.S. Grade A eggs may contain either large, small, medium or extra large eggs. The USDA grade shield will tell the size. But this size designation has nothing to do with the grade of the eggs. Quality--and only quality--determines the grade. U.S. Grade AA or Fresh Fancy is best, followed by U.S. Grades A, B, and C.

Rice is Nice. More rice is consumed in Louisiana than in any other State in the continental U.S., a recent USDA study shows. Louisiana residents eat 30 pounds of rice a year. South Carolinians come in second with about 27 pounds. But even these two States are pikers compared with Hawaii. People there eat 113 pounds of rice a year. As for the "average" American--in this case typified by consumers in Tennessee--he eats 6 pounds a year.

HOME EQUIPMENT

Life Expectancy of Appliances. How long can you expect to keep a new refrigerator or range? If you're an "average" householder, about 16 years, says the U.S. Department of Agriculture. You might trade it in, sell it, or give it away before then--but it still would be useful for 16 years. Here are estimates for your other appliances, bought new, of course: an automatic washing machine, 11 years; wringer type or spin-dryer, 10 years; dryer, 14 years; freezer, 15 years; vacuum cleaner, 15 to 18 years; sewing machine, 24 years; toaster, 15 years; TV set, 11 years.

Portable Cooking Appliances. The bride who receives portable electric cooking appliances as wedding gifts can get along without a range, say home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture--at least, until she has the money to buy the one she wants. As basic equipment, she'll need (instead of the range) an electric frypan, 3- and 5-quart automatic saucepans and a portable oven.

FAMILY FINANCES

Long-Term Mortgages. Family economists in USDA say a family should consider both sides of a long-term mortgage--the disadvantages as well as the advantages. Although a long-term mortgage gets you a home now--and possibly makes it easier to sell it later--it costs a lot more money in the long run. A \$15,000 loan at 5-1/4 percent annual interest for 35 years will cost the homeowner \$17,823 in interest alone. The same loan for 20 years would have interest charges of \$9,264.

HOUSING

Be Ready for Santa. If you expect Santa to come down the chimney this year, better see that it's safe--not only for Santa but for other use during the winter months. To assist you in this annual inspection, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued a new publication on Fireplaces and Chimneys (FB-1889). This is a 24-page illustrated bulletin providing information on the design, construction and maintenance of chimneys and fireplaces. You can get a copy free by sending a postcard with your name and address and the title and number of the publication to: Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Johnson County, Tenn. Johnson County, Tenn., is a good place to live. It wasn't a few years ago. In the 1950's Johnson County was losing people. Its farmers had a hard time making a living off the hilly terrain. Income was low. Jobs hard to get. Business declined. Then, town and rural people began working together in a Rural Areas Development (RAD) Program. Johnson County pulled itself to its feet. They had help from many sources--local, State and Federal. It now has a new 30-acre industrial park, a garment factory employing 200 local men and women, a cotton work-glove factory providing work to 115 workers, and a small hosiery mill. Bank deposits have risen \$809,000 in two years. Business is good. New homes are being built. And more of the young people are staying in the county. Some who left have returned.

Deer Hunting Range. In line with the Rural Areas Development Program, more and more farmers are turning part of their farm lands into recreation areas. In Taney County, Mo., 30 landowners have leased a deer hunting range of almost 17,000 acres. At \$10 a hunter for the 7-day season, they took in about \$3,500 last year. Programs such as this not only boost income but offer much-needed recreation areas for city sportsmen.